

TOP SECRET

14 January 1956

Copy No. 103

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

DOCUMENT NO. 51
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☒
☐ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2010
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 17 JAN 1980 REVIEWER:

OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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Approved For Release 2004/12/21 : CIA-RDP79T00975A002300510001-9

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION

[REDACTED]
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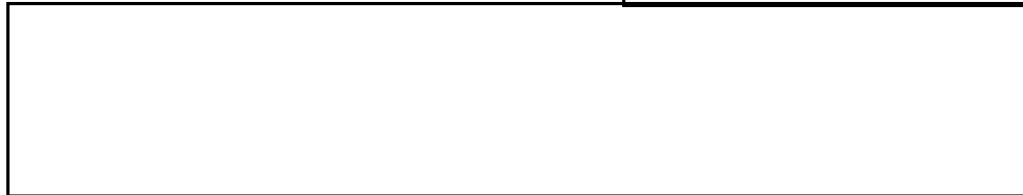
1. JORDAN MAY BE FORCED TO ACCEPT ARAB AID
OFFER

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The American embassy in Amman believes that the situation in Jordan has deteriorated to such an extent that an offer even of substantial aid from the West probably would not enable King Hussain to reject a subsidy in the amount reported to have been offered by Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia.

The British Foreign Office, however, appears confident that the king will decline the offer, although it believes another outbreak of rioting would follow an announcement of such a decision.



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The Foreign Office told the American embassy in London that Iraqi prime minister Nuri is undecided on his reply to Hussain's request that Iraqi troops stand by to help restore order in Jordan. The British Foreign Office implied that British troops from Cyprus rather than Iraqi forces would be used in an emergency. Jordanian Arab Legion leader Glubb, according to the Foreign Office, has reported that 3,000 Saudi troops, mostly irregulars, are grouped at Kaf, near the Jordanian border, presumably ready to enter Jordan if the situation deteriorates further.

Comment

The three Arab states reportedly proposed on 11 January to give Jordan the equivalent of \$280,000,000 over a ten-year period--a sum about \$70,000,000 less than Jordan would receive from Britain over the same period--if present arrangements with Britain continued. It would seem unlikely that Hussain can afford to reject the Arab offer outright. His decision will probably depend primarily on his government's ability to maintain order in the next few days.



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3. POPULAR REPUBLICANS OPPOSE CONCEPT OF MINORITY FRENCH GOVERNMENT

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The Popular Republican Party (MRP) announced on 12 January that it will oppose the formation of a minority government by the Republican Front.

An MRP leader told an American official in Paris on 10 January that his party attributes most of the pressure for a minority government to propaganda by Mendes-France supporters aimed at securing more influence in a wider coalition. The source intimated that negotiations are taking place between Mollet's Socialists and MRP leaders, who apparently anticipate a shift in the next week or so toward a government with a broader base.

The MRP tentatively plans to support a Socialist-led government, but its leaders object that one headed by Mendes-France would be short-lived and a prelude to "great chaos."

Comment

The Socialists and the MRP are the parties most likely to be able to form a bridge between the hostile center blocs. Despite Mollet's strong public insistence on a minority Republican Front government, both Socialist and MRP leaders have shown an inclination since the 2 January elections to seek a rapprochement.

The MRP's public statement will oblige Mollet and Mendes-France to clarify their position. Paris observers had previously assumed that the MRP would acquiesce in a narrowly based coalition led by a Socialist or a Mendes-France Radical and supported by the Communists on some domestic issues.

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**4. COMMUNIST-SUPPORTED POPULAR FRONT MAY
BE FORMED FOR GREEK ELECTIONS**

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The drift of Greek center parties toward co-operation with the Communist-front EDA in the national elections scheduled for 19 February appears to be accelerating. If this culminates in a formal EDA-supported Popular Front to oppose Prime Minister Karamanlis' right-of-center National Radical Union, the forces in the election may be nearly equal.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 13 January)

Israel has charged that Egyptians fired on an Israeli patrol along the Gaza strip and that antiaircraft fire was opened on an Israeli plane near the El Auja zone, but no casualties were reported. [REDACTED]

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The commander in chief of the Egyptian navy has told the American naval attaché in Cairo that he does not believe Israel will attempt to force the blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba, but that if Israel does so it will mean war. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] On 11 January the American army attaché in Cairo identified five Soviet T-34 medium tanks proceeding cross-country to a firing range in the Suez Canal Zone. The attaché reports that [REDACTED] a sizable but unknown number of Soviet medium tanks are at Shallufa, a station on the railway which parallels the canal. This is the first sighting of Soviet ground equipment in use by the Egyptians.

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